

**FALMOUTH**  
UNIVERSITY



# sustainability Report 2023



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# welcome from the vice-chancellor

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**This year we witnessed the highest global mean temperature on record. These temperatures brought with them dramatic extremes of weather which caused terrible destruction across the globe.**

Here in Falmouth, some of our students are telling us that they are experiencing ‘eco-anxiety’ – fear, sadness and anger in response to these climate and ecological crises. I can understand and empathise with these feelings. As individuals, to stand in the face of such challenge and such threat can feel frightening, but by working together and supporting each other we can make a difference.

**We can all make a difference.**

Our mission at Falmouth is to empower our people to make a positive change and we believe that our specialisms position us well to do so. Creativity deals well with uncertainty, communicates ideas, generates meaning and inspires action, while design thinking takes a human-centric approach to solve difficult problems and find new solutions, particularly when embracing technology.

We are proud of the progress we have made this year in embedding sustainability more deeply in our curriculum, ensuring that our students graduate with the knowledge and skills to shape the businesses and industries that they will join in the future. I am also proud of the way in which our community is galvanising our efforts, changing behaviours and providing a supportive, compassionate place to live, work and learn.

Best wishes,

**PROFESSOR EMMA HUNT**  
VICE-CHANCELLOR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE



# Introduction

To deliver on our sustainability ambitions, it is essential that we have accurate data and can properly measure our progress to inform our actions.

This year we have made further strides in developing a clear picture of how much carbon we are emitting, where these emissions come from, and what impact we currently – and could – have on hyperlocal biodiversity.

While critical to our long-term success, this process has had an unfavourable impact on our dashboards this year. As a result of including student travel between campus and their permanent homes in our calculations and by adjusting our assessments of the volume of campus commuting, we are reporting a 68% year-on-year increase in our Scope 3 emissions.

We are making better progress in driving down our Scope 1 and 2 emissions, delivering a 5% decrease in absolute emissions this year. This is particularly pleasing while we are still experiencing a ‘bounce-back’ in activity after the pandemic.

While these mixed results are disappointing, we believe that this transparency can help us drive future improvements.

We were delighted to win the ‘Reporting with Influence’ award at the 2022 Green Gown Awards. Our entry celebrated this annual sustainability report; a document that embodies our commitment to transparency and accountability.

Best Wishes,

**SIMON FOSTER**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ESTATES,  
OPERATIONS AND PLANNING



# Our position on the roadmap

We have completed our third annual gap analysis against the EAUC (Environmental Association of Universities & Colleges) Climate Action Toolkit, measuring our sustainability journey and assessing our position against others in the higher education sector.

In the five categories, our progress has been a mixed bag this year. Five criteria have moved from ‘in progress’ to ‘complete’, while through a critical review of our methodology, we have assessed that three should move from ‘complete’ to ‘in progress’.

## Amber to Green

- We have included climate and sustainability criteria metrics in the institution’s annual plan, with progress reported to the Board of Governors
- Having participated in the Sustainable Development Goals Teach In for the past three years and seen engagement from our academics increase year on year, ‘Participate in Global Goals Teach In’ has changed from amber to green
- For the first time this year we have been able to provide a full public picture of our carbon data, measured and calculated in alignment with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and EAUC recommended guidelines, and our full emission profile has been published
- We have also implemented renewable energy use across our Penryn Campus using onsite photovoltaics
- Our Biodiversity Project Officer has been working with the local community to improve local biodiversity

Educate  
InSpire  
Enrich

## Green to Amber

- Although we have folded sustainability and climate goals into the University’s risk register, this does not constitute a climate adaption approach
- Our scope 1 and 2 plan is focussed on generating renewable energy and efficiency on site, however these programs are not focussed on direct energy reduction or demand
- While we currently do not invest directly in fossil fuel-related businesses, we do not currently have a policy or strategy to ensure we will never invest either directly or indirectly through things like our pension schemes



# Climate Action Roadmap activities by area

	EMERGING			ESTABLISHED			LEADING		
LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE	Gather college views on sustainability	Establish sustainability committee	Hold workshop with leaders to set net zero target	Incorporate net zero ambitions in strategic plan and establish ring-fenced budget			Develop climate adaptation/ climate risk mgmt. approach	Incorporate sustainability into governance arrangements	Embed climate responsibility into staff development
TEACHING, LEARNING & RESEARCH		Deliver carbon literacy training to staff and students			Participate in Global Goals Teach In		Audit curriculum against SDGs using Responsible Futures framework		Train teaching staff to incorporate sustainability into curriculum for all courses
ESTATES & OPERATIONS	Ensure recycling/ signage is available in every building	Implement strategies to reduce energy use		Modify estates strategy in line with net zero target	Apply for Salix finance loan to improve energy efficiency/ reduce emissions	Set and implement targets to reduce waste on campus by 50-75%	Implement new travel policy to reduce long-haul aviation travel	Implement renewable energy on a part of/ all of the estate	Expand travel policy to reduce emissions from commuting to/from campus
PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT		Sign the Global Climate Letter	Negotiate with food suppliers for sustainable food options	Sign the SDG Accord	Establish climate action network with local council	Develop fossil fuel divestment plan	Work with local community/ council/ businesses to improve local biodiversity		Apply for Green Gown or AoC Beacon Award
DATA COLLECTION	Upskill on measuring emissions		Measure college carbon footprint using existing data		Develop and implement plan to measure Scope 3 emissions		Share carbon footprint data collection approach as model to other colleges		

● Yet to start ● In progress ○ Complete

# Theme 1: Learning & Teaching

## Goal 1

Design our curriculum to include sustainability learning outcomes

## Goal 2

Embed sustainability-related projects and challenges within the curriculum

## Goal 3

Ensure graduates leave Falmouth with an increased awareness of sustainability

In the 2021/22 academic year, we made sustainability a mandatory consideration during the academic course validation or revalidation process. That means that as our academic portfolio evolves, sustainability principles and practices will have to be embedded.

Our Sustainability team reviewed the curriculum documentation for 51% of our course portfolio using our Falmouth Curriculum Ladder for Sustainability (FCL-S) framework approach and has assessed that 36 courses have now embedded – or intend to embed in the coming academic year – sustainability learning outcomes in their course delivery.

25 of our courses deliver, or will deliver from September 2024, a whole sustainability-focused module as part of the course. Within the formal descriptions of the course documentation analysed, we identified 1,039 individual references to our core sustainability themes.

This analysis is helping us generate a baseline understanding of how sustainability content, initiatives and assessments are embedded within our curriculum.

In total, the number of courses that have evidenced sustainability in some way is 41, or 37% of our portfolio.

32% of our courses will have sustainability learning outcomes embedded from September 2024



## Case Study:

### ‘Agency’ & ‘Collaboration’, BA Photography

From September 2024, our BA(Hons) Photography degree will include two sustainability-focussed modules in two years of the course. ‘Agency’ will aim to empower first-year students with an awareness and understanding of how photography can connect with issues of wellbeing, environmental and social responsibility, while ‘Collaboration’ will enable second-year students to meet and learn from companies, charities and wider organisations that are actively engaged in sustainability issues.

## Case Study:

### ‘Exploring Sustainability’, Cornwall Business School

The ‘Exploring Sustainability’ module will be delivered from September 2024 and will sit across all seven courses delivered by the Cornwall Business School. The module aims to inspire and engage first-year students in sustainable development, across all three social, environmental and economic elements.

## Case Study:

### ‘The Good Life in 2030’, BA Illustration

Third-year Illustration students were invited by Purpose Disruptors, a network of advertising insiders working to reshape the industry to tackle climate change, to create an advert that would help audiences understand how we must radically change our lifestyles to reach the goal of halving emissions by 2030.



1,001 students reached during the SDG Teach In

## Goal 4

### Ensure that students have an understanding of the UN SDGs

During the March 2023 ‘Sustainable Development Goals Teach In’ campaign we continued to build our academic engagement, supporting academics in placing the Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of teaching activity across the month.

Although more of our academics were involved this year – 24 took part – and an estimated 18% of our students were reached and engaged with sustainability content, we dropped in the rankings to 11th out of a total of 128 institutions. Still an achievement to be proud of, but something we can aim to improve next year.

# Theme 2: Environment & Operations



## Goal 1

### Achieve reductions in scope 1 and 2 emissions in order to reach net zero by 2040

We are pleased to report that our campuses have delivered a 5% decrease in absolute Scope 1 and 2 carbon emissions this year, a reduction from 2,355 to 2,248 tCO<sub>2</sub>e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent).

Reviewing our carbon emissions based on gross internal area (CO<sub>2</sub>e per m<sup>2</sup>) against a 2005/2006 baseline, Penryn Campus has now seen a 59% reduction, with Falmouth Campus just behind with a 57% reduction – significantly ahead of our target of a 50% reduction by 2025.

The Estates team has continued to deliver our energy decarbonisation plan, reducing overall site consumption with energy efficiency improvements. Lighting is being upgraded to LED in the Peter Lanyon Building and is due for completion next year. On the Sports Centre and the Daphne Du Maurier and Peter Lanyon buildings, an additional rooftop solar photovoltaic system has been installed that is providing renewable energy for campus use.

Phase one of a sub-metering project is now online, covering the majority of campus. This new initiative allows us to collect more granular energy data, and giving the Estates team the ability to identify potential areas of waste and to implement changes. The rollout will continue across remaining buildings next year.

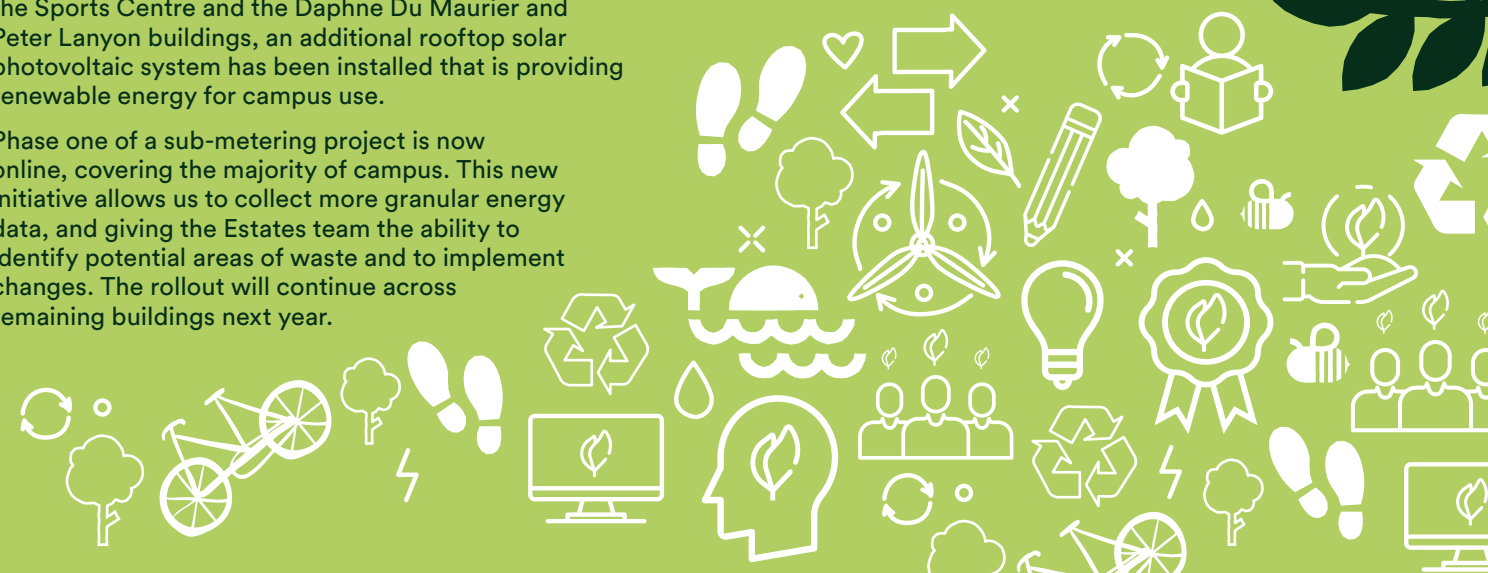
## Goal 2

### Achieve reductions in scope 3 emissions, including those from the supply chain, to reach net zero by 2050

During the Covid-affected years, our emissions were artificially suppressed as campus activity and travel were restricted, therefore our reporting has showed a dramatic but false reduction in 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Taking 2021/22 as a baseline year, we are disappointed that our overall Scope 3 carbon emissions have still significantly increased by 51% this year, from 8,234tCO<sub>2</sub>e to 13,877tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

The cause of this increase is explained overleaf. However, our analysis suggests that Scope 3 emissions account for 86% of our carbon impact. We must continue to work hard to drive this down and will focus on initiatives for the coming year.



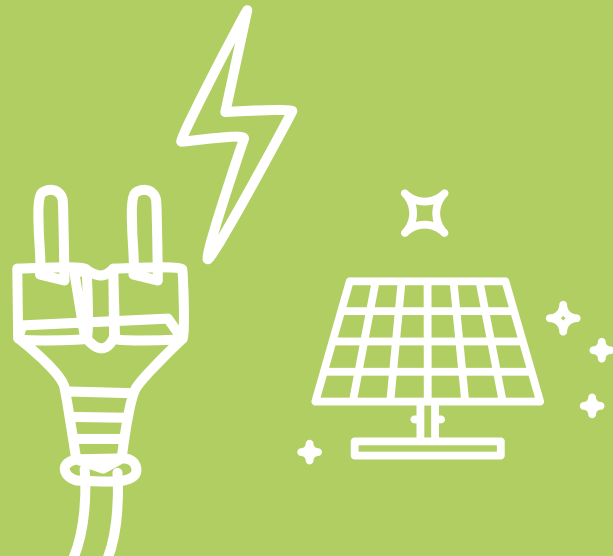
## PROCUREMENT

57.5% of our Scope 3 emissions are from procured goods and services. This year has seen a 20% increase in emissions related to procurement because of increased levels of purchasing across the University and by our campus partners FX Plus as behaviours continue to revert to pre-pandemic patterns.

However, we are proud that our Responsible Procurement Strategy was recently nominated for a UK National Go Award in the 'Best net zero strategy' category, recognising the strength of the initiative that focuses on the triple bottom line. By embedding and rewarding sustainability criteria in the procurement process, it ensures our suppliers are contractually obligated to deliver on their own and our sustainability ambitions.

Our Procurement team has also continued the rollout of our NetPositive tool, enabling our suppliers to generate their own bespoke Sustainability Action Plan. 88% of suppliers have now completed their action plans. Our aim is that 100% of our supply chain fills this out by July 2024.

Recent analysis has shown that 37% of our suppliers are either Devon or Cornwall-based with an annual spend of £11.6m, equating to 44% of our impactable spend. We also found that 70% of our suppliers have a social value strategy in place and 51% of our suppliers have committed to reducing their carbon impact by 2027.



## TRAVEL

19.4% of our Scope 3 emissions are caused by students travelling between their permanent homes and university between terms, 8.6% is from campus commuting by staff and students, with only 0.5% from business travel.

For the first time, we have included student travel to and from campus and their permanent home, as recommended by the EAUC. This significantly impacted our total emission profile by adding an additional 3,123 tCO<sub>2</sub>e.

This year we undertook a travel survey for all staff and students, including our campus partners FX Plus. The insights have informed our calculation of our travel-related emissions. The results suggest that 56% of staff and 11% of students are driving to and from campus individually. These journeys are responsible for 54% of our total commuting travel emissions'.

As a consequence, now that we have greater and more accurate visibility of how often and from where our students and staff travel on a daily basis, we are reporting an 80% increase year-on-year for emissions relating to commuting.

The findings from the survey will also be fed into the development of a 2030 Sustainable Travel Plan which will be launched before the end of the 2023/2024 academic year. A primary focus of the transport plan will be to phase out single occupancy car use.

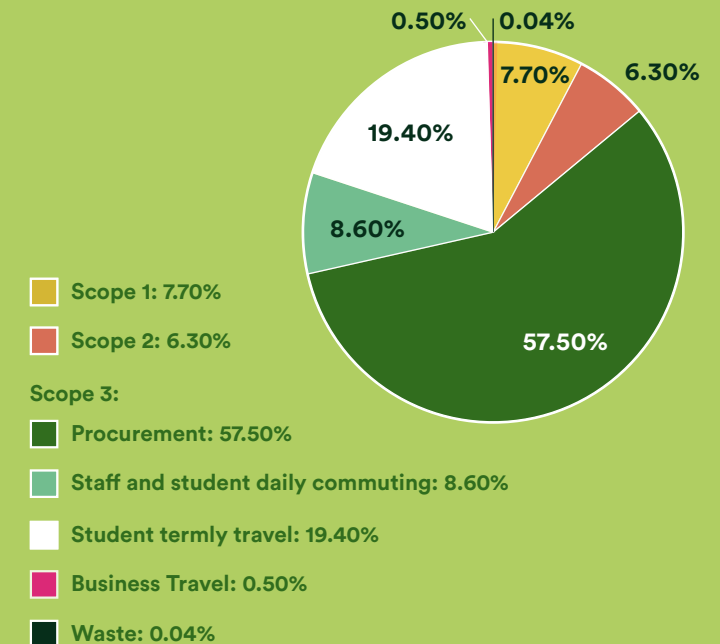
Only 0.5% of our Scope 3 emissions, the equivalent of 70 tCO<sub>2</sub>e, are a consequence of business travel, but this is up 64% year on year, as more off-campus activity returned after the pandemic.

This year we were pleased to contribute to consultations for Cornwall Council's Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The plan has identified a number of routes around Falmouth and Penryn for improved cycling and walking lanes, with work now underway for a central lane through Falmouth into Penryn.

In June, we took part in the Cornwall Active Travel Challenge jointly with our campus partners. The month-long competition encourages active travel and moving away from single car occupancy during the summer. We were delighted to take first place!

Area	TCO <sub>2</sub> e
Scope 1	1,236.40
Scope 2	1,011.12
Procurement: Falmouth University	4,010.466
Procurement: FX Plus	5,263.3
Commuting travel: students	663.4
Commuting travel: staff	723.1
Student termly travel	3,122.90
Business travel	87
Waste	6

Falmouth University's 2022/2023 Carbon Profile



## WASTE & RECYCLING

This year we've made some big improvements in our waste and recycling processes.

Our food waste collections from Glasney Halls of Residence, food outlets and central locations on both campuses have been successful, diverting twice the amount of food from general waste streams to recycling compared to the previous year. Overall, 4.6 tonnes of food waste were recycled through anaerobic digestion from halls of residence alone in the first year of operation.

New TetraPak carton collections have been implemented across both campuses, generating over 5,000 items for recycling in the first three months of operation in 2023, alongside recycling bins collecting hard-to-recycle items such as medicine blister packs, toothbrushes, disposable vapes and batteries.

Overall, mixed recycling increased from 87.5 tonnes to 91 tonnes, up 4%, while general waste fell by 13.2%. Falmouth Campus saw a remarkable drop of 34% in general waste.



**We recently launched carbon footprint labelling on our menus for three main food outlets using the Klimato platform. In the Stannary, Sustainability Cafe and Fox Cafe, diners can now use these menus to make more sustainable food choices. There is also a refreshed menu with a stronger focus on vegetarian and vegan options.**



## Goal 3

### Improve, meet and exceed environmental legislative and regulatory requirements

The environmental compliance working group commissioned and produced an environmental management training module for staff that covers all aspects of risk and environmental legislation.

## Goal 4

### Maximise the biodiversity of campuses to boost regeneration and carbon sequestration



This year, we worked with ecological consultants Plan for Ecology Ltd to calculate Penryn Campus' baseline biodiversity metrics. This data will inform our actions in future and will help monitor changes in the quality of the habitats on campus grounds.

The Grounds team has enhanced over 6,000 square metres of land on Penryn campus for biodiversity through student and staff conservation volunteering sessions, including the planting of 84 trees and 500 wildflower plugs to improve the quality of grasslands and arable land on campus. Invasive non-native Cherry laurel has been cleared from approximately 300 square metres of woodland near the walled garden, creating space for native vegetation.

Through collaboration with the Students' Union Ecological Society (EcoSoc), wildlife sightings on campus from 2015 onwards have now been collated into a Campus Biodiversity Database. This database will be regularly updated by future wildlife monitoring surveys for both campuses and shared with relevant national schemes to help track biodiversity across the UK.



# Theme 3: People & Behaviour

## Goal 1

Ensure that all staff and students have a greater awareness of sustainability and the impact we have both as an organisation and as individuals

From their first moment on campus, we want our students to know that Falmouth cares about sustainability. This year we embedded information about sustainability in the induction process, including a 'Sustainability Tour' video of campus for the 'Step Into Falmouth' transition programme, as well as features and articles throughout the Student App.

**101 in-person sustainability events delivered this year, with 500 attendees**

Our Sustainability team continues to deliver engaging, informative sustainability events, increasing opportunities for students, staff and the local community to learn more about key issues and how lifestyle changes can help make a difference. These included:

- Bike repair stalls offering free services, discounted accessories and local active travel guidance
- Biodiversity-related activities including conservation volunteering sessions, butterfly and bumblebee surveying walks and wildflower planting sessions
- Presentations and introductory sessions on sustainability on campus
- Digital carbon footprint workshops

We also celebrated Fairtrade Fortnight with events on both campuses, hosting external organisations and running 17 events in collaboration with the local

Fairtrade Falmouth group, students and local groups and businesses. From sourcing local fruit and vegetables and working with 'SwitchIt.Green' to highlight the links between banking and sustainability, to running Fairtrade film screenings and taking over the regular quiz night, we aimed to help our community understand the importance of buying Fairtrade, discover local, sustainable suppliers, and learn about key considerations for making positive purchasing choices.

### 10 eco-anxiety drop-ins

We launched 'Breathing Space', our new eco-anxiety support network, in February 2023. Drop-in sessions make space for the mental health impacts that come with the climate and ecological crises and provide support to help empower people to move from anxiety to agency. We ran 10 drop-ins this year, and initial feedback suggests that people are coming to them feeling anxious, drained, hopeless and overwhelmed, but they are leaving feeling optimistic, interested and motivated.

We've also produced an online, self-led resource, which enables people to engage with key questions, activities and resources relating to eco-anxiety anonymously and learn from other members of the community who're doing the same. During the past academic year, our digital resources have been viewed by a total of 100 unique visitors.

### 500 trees planted as a new, regenerative working woodland

In February 2023, we partnered with PlantOne Cornwall to deliver on our pledge to support local reforestation in Cornwall, and in doing so helped boost biodiversity, sequester carbon and drive positive behavioural change within our student and staff communities.

## Goal 2

Drive measurable change in staff and student behaviours

### Over half a tonne of carbon saved from our first Swap Shop

In May 2023, we launched our new 'Swap Shop' initiative, with the aim of helping our campus community reduce resource use and waste, encourage people to choose second-hand over new and ultimately create a space for better resource redistribution on our campuses. This first campaign was a big success – during the move-out period in residences, over 100kg of items were donated, 204 items were taken and redistributed. We estimate this equated to saving over half a tonne of carbon.





# The data: Year-on-year comparisons



TRACKING OUR PROGRESS					
Policy Theme	Goal	Data	AY22/23	Status	Notes
Theme 1: Learning & Teaching	Goal 1	Courses with sustainability learning outcomes	35	Green	
	Goal 2	Courses with sustainability content embedded		Amber	41 courses have been recognised to evidence embedding at least one of our FCL-S sustainability themes in their curriculum
	Goal 4	Ranking in the Teach In for total percentage of students engaged	24th	Amber	

## TRACKING OUR PROGRESS

Theme 2: Environment & Operations	Goal 1	Percentage reduction in total Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions per m <sup>2</sup> , compared to our 2005/06 baseline	Penryn Campus 59% Falmouth Campus 57%	Green	
	Goal 1	Penryn Campus total Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions per m <sup>2</sup>	0.0387 tCO <sub>2</sub> e per m <sup>2</sup>	Green	
	Goal 1	Falmouth Campus total Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions per m <sup>2</sup>	0.0230 tCO <sub>2</sub> e per m <sup>2</sup>	Green	
	Goal 1	Total Scope 1 & 2 carbon emissions	2,248 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Green	A 5% decrease in emissions
	Goal 2	Total Scope 3 carbon emissions	13,769 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Red	We've started to include student term time travel significantly increasing scope 3 emissions
	Goal 2	Proportion of total supply chain that is local (Cornwall & Devon based companies)	37%	Amber	
	Goal 2	Proportion of food and drink suppliers that are local (Cornwall and Devon-based companies)	68%	Green	A £15m spend has increased this category.
	Goal 2	Total waste generated	452 tonnes	Green	
	Goal 2	Total recycling	157 tonnes	Red	
	Goal 2	Average recycling rate	36%	Red	
Goal 2	Total food waste recycled	17.8 tonnes	Green		
Goal 4	Estimated number of bees supported by the wildflower areas across Penryn Campus, per day	N/A			More comprehensive biodiversity metrics now being pursued



